

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
AID-05 NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 /066 W
-----125571 221500Z /43

O R 221317Z DEC 77

FM AMEMBASSY ANKARA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9950

INFO AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY NICOSIA

USMISSION USNATO

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

USCINCEUR

USNMR SHAPE

USDOCOSOUTH NAPLES

USDOCOLANDSOUTHEAST IZMIR

AMCONSUL ADANA

AMCONSUL ISTANBUL

AMCONSUL IZMIR

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 ANKARA 9281

USEEC

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, TU

SUBJECT: GOVERNMENT CRISIS: DEMIREL DECIDES TO TOUGH IT OUT

REF: ANKARA 9252 (DTG 211439Z DEC 77)

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: AFTER CONSULTATIONS WITH ITS SENATORS AND
DEPUTIES DEC. 21, THE JUSTICE PARTY (NP) ANNOUNCED THAT IT WOULD
NOT RESIGN OR ASK FOR A VOTE OF CONFIDENCE. INSTEAD, THE JP
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INVITED THE REPUBLICAN PEOPLE'S PARTY (RPP) TO BRING A PARLIA-
MENTARY CENSURE MOTION AGAINST THE GOVERNMENT AND PLEDGED TO
RESIGN IF IT CARRIED BY EVEN ONE VOTE. (THE RPP PRESENTED SUCH
A MOTION DEC. 22.) THIS TACTIC, THE MOST TIME-CONSUMING OF
THOSE AVAILABLE TO THE JP, MAY REFLECT BOTH DEMIREL'S OWN TENACITY
AND SUCH CONSIDERATIONS AS GIVING TIME FOR ADDING TO ECEVIT'S
DIFFICULTIES IN BRINGING DOWN THIS GOVERNMENT AND FORMING A NEW

ONE. IN A BITTER FORETASTE OF THE COMING BATTLE, THE JP HAS ACCUSED THE RPP OF RESORTING TO INTRIGUE AND THE JP DEFECTORS OF RECEIVING FAVORS IN EXCHANGE FOR THEIR RESIGNATIONS. THE PUBLICIZING OF A "SECRET" MEETING BETWEEN ECEVIT AND THE JP DISSIDENTS IN ISTANBUL FED SPECULATION ABOUT DEAL-MAKING. RPP DEPUTY SECGEN ISIK TOLD US ECEVIT PROBABLY CAN FORM A COALITION GOVERNMENT BY MID-JANUARY. END SUMMARY.

2 AFTER LENGTHY MEETINGS OF THE JP'S JOINT SENATE AND NATIONAL ASSEMBLY (NA) GROUP AND THE EXECUTIVE BOARD ON DEC. 21, PARTY SPOKESMEN STATED THAT THE JP HAD DECIDED NOT TO RESIGN OR ASK FOR A VOTE OF CONFIDENCE, AND THEY CHALLENGED THE OPPOSITION RPP TO SUBMIT A CENSURE MOTION. A PARTY STATEMENT ALSO CONFIRMED EARLIER REPORTS THAT THE JP WILL RESIGN FROM THE GOVERNMENT IF THE CENSURE MOTION IS CARRIED BY A SIMPLE MAJORITY OF THOSE VOTING, ALTHOUGH THE CONSTITUTION REQUIRES 226 VOTES TO UNSEAT THE GOVERNMENT. ACCORDING TO MIDDAY RADIO NEWS DEC. 22, THE RPP TABLED A CENSURE MOTION.

3. IN PUBLIC STATEMENTS DEC. 21, THE JP OPENED A BITTER ATTACK AGAINST THE RPP AND JP DEFECTORS. DEMIREL REPORTEDLY SAID THAT THE RPP RESORTED TO UNDERHANDED METHODS TO WOO JP DEPUTIES AFTER THE JUNE 5 ELECTIONS AND THAT SIMILAR INTRIGUES ARE AGAIN UNDERWAY. A JP OFFICIAL SUPPORTED DEMIREL WITH ACCUSATIONS THAT SOME OF THOSE WHO RESIGNED FROM THE PARTY RECEIVED CARS, OTHERS CASH, OTHERS LIQUIDATION OF DEBTS. HE ADDED THAT ALL OF THE RECONFIDENTIAL

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SIGNEES WERE "HEADQUARTERS' CANDIDATES" IN THE LAST ELECTION WHO HAD BEEN GIVEN ASSURED PLACES ON THE ELECTION LISTS AND WHO OWED NO OBLIGATION TO A CONSTITUENCY.

4. SPECULATION THAT SOMETHING UNSEEMLY WAS AFOOT WAS FED WHEN NEWSMEN DISCOVERED THAT RPP CHAIRMAN ECEVIT AND THE GROUP OF RECENTLY RESIGNED JP DEPUTIES TRIED TO MEET SECRETLY AFTER MIDNIGHT ON DEC. 21 IN AN ISTANBUL MOTEL. AS ECEVIT WAS LEAVING ISTANBUL DEC. 21, HE RESPONDED TO REPORTERS' QUESTIONS AND HOTLY DENIED THAT THE RPP WAS INVOLVED IN BUYING DEPUTIES. HE ADDED THAT THE RPP HAD CONSISTENTLY OPPOSED SUCH TACTICS WHEN USED BY OTHER PARTIES AND THAT HE RESPECTED DEPUTIES WHO WERE LOYAL TO THEIR CONSCIENCES AND TO THE PEOPLE.

5. RPP DEPUTY SECGEN HASAN ESAT ISIK TOLD US DEC. 21 THAT HE BELIEVED RPP CHAIRMAN ECEVIT COULD AND WOULD FORM A NEW GOVERNMENT--A COALITION RATHER THAN THE ONE-PARTY GOVERNMENT PREFERRED BY THE RPP. THE PARTY HAD BEEN IN TOUCH WITH THE CHAIRMEN OF THE TWO SMALL OPPOSITION PARTIES, FEYZIOGLU (REPUBLICAN RELIANCE--TWO SEATS) AND BOZBEYLI (DEMOCRAT--ONE SEAT). ISIK WAS AT THAT TIME EXPECTING A REPORT FROM ECEVIT ON HIS TALKS IN ISTANBUL WITH THE JP DEFECTORS, WHICH WOULD DETERMINE WHETHER THE

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USEEC

GOVERNMENT COULD BE FORMED. ISIK ASSERTED THAT HIS PARTY "UNDER-
STOOD" THAT IT COULD NOT CARRY OUT ITS OWN PROGRAM IN A COALITION
AND THAT CONCESSIONS WOULD HAVE TO BE MADE TO THE PARTNERS.
ASKED ABOUT THE ATTITUDE OF THE PARTY'S LEFT WING TOWARD SUCH
CONCESSIONS, HE SAID THE LEFT WING ACCEPTED THE REALITY THAT THERE
WAS NO ALTERNATIVE. ASSUMING THAT THE GOVERNMENT WOULD FORM SOMETIME
IN THE NEXT WEEK, ISIK FORECAST THAT ECEVIT COULD FORM HIS
GOVERNMENT IN THE FIRST HALF OF JANUARY.

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6. COMMENT:

A. BY INVITING A CENSURE MOTION, THE JP HAS CHOSEN THE MOST TIME-CONSUMING OF THE THREE OPTIONS AVAILABLE TO IT AND WILL HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO FORCE A DEBATE ON THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND SHORTCOMINGS OF THE CURRENT COALITION. ACCORDING TO THE PROVISIONS OF THE TURKISH CONSTITUTION (ART. 59), MOVEMENT TO A VOTE OF CONFIDENCE THROUGH INTRODUCTION OF A CENSURE MOTION IS A PROCESS THAT CAN REQUIRE FROM SEVEN TO 12 DAYS, AND PERHAPS LONGER.

B. PROBABLY DEMIREL'S PERSONAL TENACITY--AND THE DANGER TO HIS OWN LEADERSHIP OF THE PARTY---ARE BASIC REASONS BEHIND THE DECISION AGAINST RESIGNATION OR A REQUEST FOR A VOTE OF CONFIDENCE. IN ADDITION, SEVERAL TACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS COULD BE INVOLVED. FIRST, BY INSISTING ON BEING FORCED OUT, THE JP CAN DEFEND ITSELF FROM POTENTIAL ACCUSATIONS BY ITS COALITION PARTNERS THAT IT "DELIVERED THE COUNTRY TO THE LEFT." SIMILARLY, DEMIREL AND THE JP LEADERSHIP MAY ALSO PROTECT THEMSELVES FROM CRITICISM WITHIN THE PARTY THAT THEY DID NOT GO DOWN FIGHTING. ANOTHER FACTOR COULD BE THE HOPE THAT BY EXTENDING THE CRISIS PERIOD, DEMIREL CAN GIVE HIMSELF MORE TIME AND A BETTER SETTING FOR COUNTER-PRESSURES AGAINST BOTH THE DEFECTORS AND THE RPP WHICH WOULD MAKE IT MORE DIFFICULT FOR ECEVIT TO BRING DOWN THE GOVERNMENT AND FORM A NEW ONE. ALSO, ECEVIT'S APPARENT TENDENCY TOWARD MISCALCULATIONS BASED ON OPTIMISM, AS DEMONSTRATED WHEN HE RESIGNED FROM THE GOVERNMENT IN 1974 AND WHEN HE TRIED TO FORM A MINORITY GOVERNMENT LAST JUNE, MAY GIVE RISE TO HOPES WITHIN THE JP LEADERSHIP THAT, GIVEN TIME, ECEVIT MAY MISCALCULATE AGAIN.

C. IT IS BECOMING CLEAR THAT THE CENSURE VOTE WILL INVOLVE A MUD-SLINGING CONTEST. WHILE DEMIREL AND THE JP APPARENTLY HAVE GIVEN UP HOPE OF WINNING BACK THE DEFECTORS, THEY CAN MAKE THEM AS POLITICALLY UNDESIRABLE AS POSSIBLE--AND PERHAPS THEREBY

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CAN DISCOURAGE OTHERS FROM FOLLOWING THEIR EXAMPLE. NO DOUBT THE JP WILL ALSO TRY TO IMPUGN THE MOTIVES OF THE PARTY WITH WHICH THE DEFECTORS ARE DEALING, AND WILL SEEK TO DISCREDIT ANY GOVERNMENT FORMED WITH THEM. ECEVIT CAN RESPOND THAT DEMIREL FORMED HIS 1975 COALITION BY WINNING DEFECTIONS FROM THE DEMOCRAT PARTY. SUCH AN EXCHANGE CAN HARDLY DO MUCH TO BRING THE TWO MAJOR PARTIES CLOSER TO THE "GRAND COALITION" THAT MANY HAD HOPED FOR. SPIERS

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLITICAL SITUATION, POLITICAL PARTIES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 22-Dec-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977ANKARA09281
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770477-1195
Format: TEL
From: ANKARA USEEC
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19771229/aaaaaxru.tel
Line Count: 218
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
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Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 ANKARA 9252
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 31-Aug-2004 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 151274
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: GOVERNMENT CRISIS: DEMIREL DECIDES TO TOUGH IT OUT
TAGS: PINT, TU
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/992449fe-c188-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009